

House Bill 503

By: Representatives Austin of the 10th, Casas of the 103rd, Benton of the 31st, Reese of the 98th, Kaiser of the 59th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To amend Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and secondary education, so as to enact the "Teacher Access to Resources Act"; to require the State Board of Education to establish a comprehensive website for teachers providing access to state standards and teaching resources; to require state approved textbooks to be aligned with state standards; to require local school systems to provide teacher's editions of textbooks; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Teacher Access to Resources Act."

SECTION 2.

Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and secondary education, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

"20-2-141.1.

(a) The State Board of Education shall establish a comprehensive website for teachers which provides a dynamic, interactive, online resource to enhance and support teaching and learning in Georgia. The website shall include access to all of the competencies and the uniformly sequenced core curriculum established by the State Board of Education pursuant to Code Section 20-2-140. The website shall provide printable state standards by subject and grade, access to resources that are aligned to the standards, printable curriculum frameworks by subject and grade, and other resources, tools, and web links to assist teachers.

(b) No later than July 1, 2009, the website shall include comprehensive resources for every standard in every subject and grade level, including lesson plans and other teaching aids for each standard."

SECTION 3.

Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-1010, relating to the prescribing by the State Board of Education of textbooks, as follows:

"20-2-1010.

The State Board of Education is authorized to prescribe, by regulation, the definition of the term 'textbook' to include but not be limited to systematically designed material in any medium, print or nonprint, that constitutes the principal source of study for a state funded course and to prescribe the textbooks to be used in the various grades in the public schools of this state, including the elementary grades and high school grades. Each textbook prescribed pursuant to this Code section shall adequately address, as determined by the State Board of Education, at least 80 percent of the competencies and curriculum requirements established by the State Board of Education for the particular grade level and subject. The state board may provide, by regulation, for multiple listings of textbooks for use in the various grades and may, in its discretion, authorize the local school superintendents to exercise a choice as between textbooks so listed or adopted for any particular grade."

SECTION 4.

Said chapter is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-1012, relating to committee or committees to make recommendations on textbooks, as follows:

"20-2-1012.

(a) The State Board of Education shall select a committee or committees of educators actually engaged in public school work in this state to examine textbooks and make recommendations thereon to the state board. Such committee or committees shall consist of such number of educators as the state board may deem advisable, not exceeding five in each instance. They shall serve for such time and for such duties as the state board may prescribe and shall receive such compensation as may be fixed by the state board. A committee shall only recommend a textbook if it adequately addresses at least 80 percent of the competencies and curriculum requirements established by the State Board of Education for the particular grade level and subject.

(b) In addition to any other method of textbook selection, the State Board of Education shall add to the approved list of textbooks for use in the public schools of this state any textbook or series of textbooks requested in writing by:

(1) The superintendents of five or more different school systems; or

(2) Twenty or more teachers from at least 20 different school systems who teach and are certified to teach the courses encompassed by the textbook requested,

if the requisite number of requests for the specified textbook are received within any 365 day period and the textbook adequately addresses, as determined by the State Board of Education, at least 80 percent of the competencies and curriculum requirements established by the State Board of Education for the particular grade level and subject. A textbook so required to be added to the approved list shall be added within 30 days following the receipt by the state board of the requisite number of requests. No designation shall be included upon the approved list which indicates the manner in which any textbook was added to the list. Other than the selection method, publishers whose textbooks are added to the approved list as provided in this subsection shall be required to comply with the same rules regarding textbooks as other publishers, including but not limited to price, durability, and availability."

SECTION 5.

Said chapter is further amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

"20-2-1016.

Each local school system shall provide or make available to teachers the teacher's edition of each textbook utilized by the local school system."

SECTION 6.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.